

Evening Sermon / May 15, 2022 / Psalm 147:1
“The Pleasure of Praise!”

¹ Praise the LORD!
For *it is good* to sing praises to our God;
For *it is pleasant, and* praise is beautiful. Psalm 147:1 (NKJV)

This Psalm starts the same and yet differently than many other Psalms, the similarity is the first word in the Hebrew, three words in English –

*Alleluia = Praise the LORD!
It is the reason for praising that is different:*

**For *it is good* to sing praises to our God;
For *it is pleasant, and* praise is beautiful. Psalm 147:1 (NKJV)**

- I. *The word translated “good” here means not just morally good, but enjoyably good!*

I believe it is not an error to translate this - “it is fun to sing praises to our God!”

The “good” here is a happy child’s idea of “good” ... Like “Good and Plenty” candy –

That is if you like licorice –

*If you do not like licorice, or
Think of something else you
you enjoyed as a child ...
about calories, or your blood
that kind of enjoyable*



*“Good and Plenty” candy ...
like ... and candy or treat
before you would worried
sugar and this “GOOD” is
“good” yet healthful too!*

- II. *It is why many of you have told me you enjoy Sunday Evening worship;
because we sing so many songs!*

1. *When a person comes once to Sunday Worship, they may come as doing their required duty –*

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV)

We come to worship, once each week, because we know we are weak without the fellowship and encouragement of our brothers and sisters ...

2. *Yet, we come twice or more to worship, because we love it, we enjoy praising God, because we love God, we love Jesus, we love being filled with the Holy Spirit –*

¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, Ephesians 5:18 (NKJV)

A. *The truth of Ephesians 5:18 is not a condemnation of wine, wine in moderation is also counted a “good” thing, among other “good things” God gives us –*

¹⁴ He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, And vegetation for the service of man, That he may bring forth food from the earth, ¹⁵ And wine that makes glad the heart of man, Oil to make his face shine, And bread which strengthens man’s heart. Psalm 104:14–15 (NKJV)

B. *But what Ephesians 5:18 is telling us is a preferred pleasure to wine, because we may enjoy God, enjoy the Holy Spirit, be filled with the Holy Spirit – without limitation!*

*Drunkenness with wine or any other alcoholic drink includes **dissipation** - reckless abandon, debauchery, you lose your mind more and MORE as you increase wine, but being filled with God’s Spirit, while a joyful experience, sharpens your mind! Sanctifies and improves your thinking ... the Study of God does this, praising God as we know Him better and better does this -*

“It has been said that ‘the proper study of mankind is man.’ I believe it is equally true that the proper study of God’s elect is God; the proper study of a Christian is the Godhead. The highest science, the loftiest speculation, the mightiest philosophy, which can ever engage the attention of a child of God, is the name, the nature, the person, the work, the doings, and the existence of the great God whom he calls his Father.

There is something exceedingly *improving to the mind* in a contemplation of the Divinity. It is a subject so vast, that all our thoughts are lost in its immensity; so deep, that our pride is drowned in its infinity. Other subjects we can grapple with; in them we feel a kind of self-content, and go our way with the thought, ‘Behold I am wise.’ But when we come to this master science, finding that our plumbline cannot sound its depth, and that our eagle eye cannot see its height, we turn away with the thought that vain man would be wise, but he is like a wild ass’s colt; and with solemn exclamation, ‘I am but of yesterday, and know nothing.’ No subject of contemplation will tend more to humble the mind, than thoughts of God...

But while the subject *humbles* the mind, it also expands it. He who often thinks of God, will have a larger mind than the man who simply plods around this narrow globe.... The most excellent study for expanding the soul, is the science of Christ, and Him crucified, and the knowledge of the Godhead in the glorious Trinity. Nothing will so enlarge the intellect, nothing so magnify the whole soul of man, as a devout, earnest, continued investigation of the great subject of the Deity. And, while humbling and expanding, this subject is eminently *consolatory*. Oh, there is, in contemplating Christ, a balm for every wound; in musing on the Father, there is a quietus for every grief; and in the influence of the Holy Ghost, there is a balsam for every sore.

Would you lose your sorrow? Would you drown your cares? Then go, plunge yourself in the Godhead’s deepest sea; be lost in his immensity; and you shall come forth as from a couch of rest, refreshed and invigorated. I know nothing which can so comfort the soul; so calm the swelling billows of sorrow and grief; so speak peace to the winds of trial, as a devout musing upon the subject of the Godhead.” C. H. Spurgeon

So the “good” of praise is good-enjoyable, but also good-healthy, and good, as a moral “good”

- C. *Personally, my enjoyment of the Hymns in our hymn book is not their tunes, not the music, but the LYRICS! The depth of theology in the OLD Hymns is usually far superior to our modern praise songs!*

Yet, I like those too!

III. *Praising God is “good” “pleasant” “beautiful” to us because we LOVE God –*

¹ Praise the LORD! For *it is good* to sing praises to our God; For *it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful.* Psalm 147:1 (NKJV)

*“I love you LORD, and I lift my voice, to worship You, O my soul rejoice!
Take joy my King, in what you hear, may it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear.”*

1. *Love for God, joy in God, pleasure in worship and singing praise is an acquired taste –*
⁸ **Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him! Psalm 34:8 (NKJV)**

2. *Such a taste, vision, knowledge of God’s sweetness, pleasantness requires the New Birth*

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³ **Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3 (NKJV)**

3. *Without the Holy Spirit, we do not desire eternal things, spiritual things –*

⁵⁶ **He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. ⁵⁷ As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”**

⁵⁹ **These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.**

⁶⁰ **Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard *this*, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”**

⁶¹ **When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does *this* offend you? ⁶² *What* then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? ⁶³ *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe.”* For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. ⁶⁵ And He said, “**Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.**” John 6:56–65 (NKJV)**

4. *Without God’s Spirit we are dead to the things of God, dead spiritually –*

⁶ **For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁷ Because the carnal mind *is* enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. ⁸ So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. Romans 8:6–9 (NKJV)**

¹⁴ **But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)**

5. *This death hates God, fights with God – yet even as Christian believers we struggle with this –*

¹⁶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. Galatians 5:16–17 (NKJV)

6. *There are certain things, we know are right, good and even pleasant and beautiful, yet we prefer other things to them –*

**¹ Praise the LORD!
For it is good to sing praises to our God;
For it is pleasant, and praise is beautiful. Psalm 147:1 (NKJV)**

A. *This is why we tell ourselves to praise the LORD!*

B. *This is why we are told to –*

² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. Colossians 3:2 (NKJV)

² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. (KJV)

C. *This is why we are commanded to love God –*

⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (NKJV)

True love for God pushes us to praise, despite obstacles we have even in ourselves -

“there ain't no mountain high enough
Ain't no valley low enough, ain't no river wide enough
To keep me from getting to you...” – Nickolas Ashford, Valerie Simpson

D. *We battle even ourselves, especially ourselves, our sinful selves when we love and PRAISE God –*

Who has a greater combat than he that labors to overcome himself?
Thomas ‘A Kempis

7. *Praise comes from us, despite our weaknesses, and pains, because we know God –*

³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. John 17:3 (NKJV)

¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly. John 10:10 (NKJV)

“Before the winds that blow do cease, Teach me to dwell within Thy calm;
Before the pain has passed in peace, Give me, my God, to sing a psalm,
Let me not lose the chance to prove The fulness of enabling love,
O Love of God, do this for me;
Maintain a constant victory.

Before I leave the desert land For meadows of immortal flowers,
Lead me where streams at Thy command Flow by the borders of the hours,
That when the thirsty come, I may Show them the fountains in the way.
O Love of God, do this for me;
Maintain a constant victory.” Amy Carmichael